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## ANOTHER CHESAPEAKE AFFAIR.

NEW YORK, December 20.—The steamship *Morning Star*, from New Orleans on December 13, via Havana on the 15th, has arrived here. She brings a hundred thousand dollars in specie, and eleven hundred bales of cotton. Among her passengers is Gen. Weitzel and staff, who have been transferred to Gen. Butler's department, in compliance with his wish. The *Morning Star* also brings as passengers Capt. James Nichols and Walker Greenough, supercargo of the schooner *Joseph L. Gerety*, which was captured the second day out from Matamoras.

Capt. Nichols reports that he left Matamoras November 16th, bound for New York, with a cargo of cotton and six passengers. On the night of the 17th the passengers, with drawn revolvers, surprised and imprisoned the captain and crew, and took possession of the vessel. The captors, after keeping the crew in confinement eight days, put all hands in a small boat and told them to find their way to land the best way they could. They landed on the coast of Sisal, after two days and nights at sea. There they got passage to Havana.

The passengers' names were T. E. Hogg, Baltimore; J. Brown, of Canada; James Clements, Kelly Brown, and John Wilson.

He says there are four more in Matamoras waiting for chances like this. After they put the captain and crew in small boats, they hoisted the Confederate flag. When asked whither they were bound, they said to Balize, Honduras, where they could sell the vessel and cargo. The vessel was owned by Francis Gerety, of New York.

Gen. Hurlbut, at Memphis, Tenn., has issued a special order to the effect that "guards be established on three designated roads leading into the city. Cotton will be admitted on the roads, but none other than officers in charge of pickets will make memorandums of the name of the owner, consigner and consignee, mark the number of bales, and report the names daily to the local Treasury agent.—The time of day is also specified when cotton and produce may be brought in, and otherwise than in compliance with this order will be seized. The commanders at La Grange, Corinth and Columbus will be authorized to make similar regulations at the posts named when, in their judgment, the state of their commands and the adjacent country will permit."

The New Orleans *Picayune* of the 9th, has received information confirming the reported recapture by the Mexicans, of Puebla, from the French. There was no resistance, the number of troops being small, and retiring before Generals Beriozabel and Negrete, who occupied the place at the head of about five thousand men.

## THE EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS.

The National Intelligencer of this morning says:—"Gen. Hitchcock, who visited Fortress Monroe last week on the subject of an exchange of prisoners, made but a brief stay there. We learn that he had a conference with Gen. Butler on this important question, the result of which was that the latter officer is authorized to send to City Point six or eight hundred Confederate prisoners, with an offer to Commissioner Ould to exchange them, man for man. If this experiment proves successful, exchanges on this basis will be resumed. The statement that any instructions have been given tending to ignore the rights of prisoners of war of the negro soldiers whom the Confederates have captured, whether originally bond or free, is incorrect. On the contrary, it is said that the most stringent orders have been recently issued under which the Confederate authorities are to be held to strict accountability with regard to this description of prisoners. Forty-five thousand Confederate prisoners are now in our possession."

Among the documents appended to the Report of the U. S. Secretary of the Navy, are the reports of the officers commanding the *Monitors*, when Admiral Dupont made his attack upon Charleston. According to these reports the *Monitors* were much more seriously damaged by the fire from the Confederate defences, than has been generally supposed; and they go far to show that Admiral Dupont could not, under the circumstances, have done more than he did. Some of the officers express unfavorable opinions as to the efficiency of *Monitors* against strong fortifications.

The Committee of Elections of the House of Representatives of the U. S. have now before them five contested cases from Missouri, two from Pennsylvania, one from Massachusetts, one from Kentucky, one from Maryland, one from Iowa, and one from Virginia.

During the last three months the N. Y. Herald has advocated the Presidential claims of McClellan, Lincoln, Banks, Blair, Seward and Chase. It has now found a new candidate in the person of Gen. Grant.

The N. Y. Herald's Charleston letter says:—"The famous floating battery, which was used against Fort Sumter when Anderson held it, broke adrift in the last gale and smashed through and carried away the obstructions, and now lies ashore near the north end of Folly Island. She was formerly plated with railroad iron, but that had been removed for other purposes."

It is now thought that the Atlantic Cable will not be laid next year, as has been intended it should; as many experiments on different plans in the construction of the Cable have consumed much time, and are likely to consume much more before it is done with.

Commodore Van Brunt, of the United States navy, died last week at Dedham, Massachusetts.

A case is before the Supreme Court of the U. S. presenting the following features: Judge Roosevelt, of New York, sued upon a bond.—The defendant offered him legal tender notes. He refused to take them, and an issue was then made in one of the Courts of the State. The decision there rendered was against the constitutionality of the act of Congress. The case was taken by appeal to the Court of Appeals of New York, where the decision was reversed. Judge Boosevelt then took out a writ of error to bring it before the Supreme Court. The defendant in error has moved to dismiss the writ of error.

Some commotion was caused in the U. S. House of Representatives on Thursday by the resolutions introduced by Mr. Smith, of Kentucky, pledging the House to a vigorous prosecution of the war, and declaring against any armistice or intervention while a Rebel remained in arms, &c. The resolutions were voted for separately, and upon the second and third resolutions the vote was unanimous, with the exception of Benjamin G. Harris, of Maryland.

Capt. Newhall, formerly of the 3d Pa. cavalry, but at the time of his death A. A. G. on Gen. Gregg's staff, was drowned last Friday night, while crossing a small creek this side of the Rappahannock. Capt. N. had just been to headquarters of the Army of the Potomac to have a leave of absence signed, and was returning to his quarters when the accident occurred.

Accounts from the Western Plains represent great suffering among men and stock in consequence of severe snow storms. No hay or grass could be had, and stock were dying off by hundreds, and many lives are known to have been lost by the intense cold. As over one hundred trains have been sent out, much anxiety is felt for their safety. Fourteen inches of snow has fallen here, and much of it having drifted, all the roads were blockaded. No mails have been received at Leavenworth for three days.

The special correspondent of the Baltimore American from Charleston harbor writes on the 13th inst. that the Confederate obstructions there are being washed away by the stormy weather, large numbers of heavy timbers floating down with the tide. The bombardment of the city was actively progressing.

The gold market in New York became much excited last week by the intelligence from Liverpool that the Bank of England had raised the rate of interest to nine per cent., a rate almost unprecedented.

There are six thousand eight hundred and twenty-five names before the U. S. Senate Military Committee for confirmation. The list is interesting. Among the number are over forty brigadiers and many major generals. An equally great number of applicants are before the President and Secretary of War.

President Lincoln issued a proclamation on the 16th instant, suspending certain tonage and import duties on the ships of Nicaragua.